

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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AT THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A CRUISE UPON WHEELS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXVI. THE MISTS BEGIN TO CLEAR AWAY.

WE have got to the last stage of all, and the end draws very near.

In the last chapter we left all that great concourse of persons who were assembled in the court-house of the Old Bailey to witness the trial of Gabrielle Penmore, waiting anxiously till they should hear what was about to be said by him on whom the duty devolved of balancing one against the other those two theories which had been laid before the court, one of which assumed the guilt and the other the innocence of the Prisoner at the Bar. The relative worth of these, the degree of credit of which each was worthy, and by which of the two arguments the jury were to be influenced in coming to their final decision, it was now the judge's work to decide.

"In the course of all the long years during which I have exercised the office of judge," the old man said, "no case has ever come before me similar to this in strength of evidence on both sides, or in which each has seemed to preponderate in its turn with such an overwhelming force. That for the prosecution, as it was developed before us, step by step, and point by point, seemed gradually to shut up, one by one, each avenue of escape by which the accused might have hoped to pass, until at last there came to be amassed against her such an accumulated load of testimony as made it appear an impossible thing that she should ever emerge from under so overwhelming a structure. Such was the effect of the evidence which was brought forward to support the prosecution. It was almost conclusive, as convincing probably as circumstantial evidence ever can be. And yet no sooner had the counsel for the defence put forward his view of the case, than it became evident that there was still one loophole left by which escape was yet attainable for the accused, one avenue by which it was possible for her to pass forth into the light unhindered and unhurt—if only it could be shown that the way along that avenue was clear and unencumbered..."

And with that the old judge proceeded to pass

in review all the evidence which had been taken in court during these two days. He went through it all with the utmost care and completeness, commenting on the testimony of each witness in its turn with infinite clearness and perspicuity. Those few words which he had spoken, to begin with, formed, so to speak, the text which he now went on to illustrate more fully. The reader will conceive with what attention he was listened to, as he thus examined all that had been put forward by the different witnesses. To two persons in that court each word that fell from the old man's lips was indeed of awful import. Throughout this trial there had been something of comfort to Gabrielle in the thought that her cause was in such hands as those of the old judge, and that her life was in his keeping. She had felt throughout a sort of trust in him, together with something of reverence, which had even made her try to stand when first he began to speak; an attempt which had soon, however, been abandoned, as her forces had quickly given away.

At first, and as the evidence for the prosecution was passing under the judge's consideration, it seemed to Gabrielle that this one in whom she had trusted had turned against her, so completely did he do justice to the evidence, showing how strong it was, how full, how convincing. It made her tremble to hear him admit this: it had never appeared to her before how powerful, how almost impregnable, the case was against her; what a mass of damning proof the accusers were possessed of. What was this righteous judge doing? He seemed to be accumulating evidence against her. Did he think her guilty in his heart? Did his sense of justice compel him to condemn her?

It was indeed a terrible moment. More than half a century of law-study had taught this gentleman to know what evidence was, to understand it fully, and estimate it truly, whether in its strength or in its weakness, and therefore it was that he was able to appreciate the full force of this evidence against Gabrielle Penmore—which, indeed, the reader will admit, was most strong—and to put it before those who listened to him with an extraordinary force and clearness. So much for the prosecution. But when at last the time came for considering what might be said on the other side, and the evidence for the defence came to be reviewed in its turn, then men saw that all that proof which

had seemed so complete and so conclusive as it was spread forth before them must give place to proofs yet more complete and more conclusive, and that it was only to show how irresistible were these last that this wise gentleman had dwelt so long on the strength of those which they were to supersede. If the first arguments were strong, what must be the strength of those which could overpower them?

For, in his judgment, he said, this evidence for the defence was evidence against which no opposition could stand. It was a strange case. The facts which had been proved in support of the defence in no way disproved those which were put forward by the prosecution. Both these sets of facts *were* facts. Those which were stated in the first instance as proving the guilt of the accused might legitimately cause suspicion to attach to her in an extraordinary degree. It was not wonderful that suspicion should have attached to her while only those facts were known. There was, however, this difference between the evidence for the prosecution and the evidence for the defence. The evidence for the prosecution would lead the jury to suspect how the deceased lady had died—but the evidence for the defence had done more, it had brought them to know how she died. That was the difference, and it was a great one.

From that moment—from the moment when these meaning words were spoken—a change seemed to come over the proceedings in court. All seemed to wear a different aspect. It is hardly too much to say that at that moment a tide turned in the affairs of Gilbert and Gabrielle Penmore. Those who were well versed in what takes place in law courts, and who knew, by long experience, much about judges and juries, whispered each other that the summing-up was all in favour of the accused, and that the trial was virtually over. And so indeed it was. From point to point the judge went on examining the evidence, showing how clear it was in all things; how evident that the deceased lady had for some time been in the habit of swallowing certain quantities of opium; how, having commenced the practice under the desire to alleviate pain, and continued it, as many had done before her, because of the pleasurable sensations which the use of the drug imparted, she had probably taken at last a larger dose than usual, and this, acting on a constitution especially liable to the evil influence of opium, had killed her. This was what the counsel for the defence had already told them, and in doing so had only acted as the evidence which he had laid before them had justified him in doing.

Yes, the initiated ones were right; the trial was virtually over. As the judge went on, he seemed to carry the mass of his listeners with him. A great measure of excitement was astir in the place, though it could not be said in what way it was shown. Outward decency was maintained by all; but it may have been that all drew their breath harder than was their use, that heads were pressed more eagerly forward, and that there was some swaying and movement from side to side of this great crowd of sympa-

thising human beings. Then there would be a sort of rustling and stir among them, which would express much, and now and again one of the multitude would whisper a hurried word into a neighbour's ear.

"Virtually over," "Summing up all favourable." There could be no doubt of it. The judge paused, it is true, to censure the ease and readiness with which Cornelius Vampi had allowed himself to be persuaded into selling laudanum to the deceased; he did not shrink either from expressing his regret at finding that follies, so long ago exploded as a belief in magic and the influences of the stars, should still have attractions for sane and even educated men; but he in no respect considered that such perversion of judgment rendered those in whom it existed unfit to give evidence as to facts with which they had been mixed up. The evidence given, the testimony borne by Cornelius Vampi, and by the gentleman who seemed to be his disciple, was clear and consistent throughout. It was in no respect shaken by the severe and searching cross-examination which each of those witnesses had had to sustain, and it was as worthy of belief, and as convincing in all respects, as any that he, the judge, had ever heard in a court of justice.

"Virtually over." From the moment when the old judge had passed from the consideration of the evidence for the prosecution to a review of that offered for the defence, from the moment when he had stated openly that the testimony brought forward to support the prosecution, taught men to suspect how Diana Carrington had died, but that the evidence for the defence taught them to know how she had died, from that moment the trial was, to all intents and purposes, over; and with every additional word of that long summing-up, the nature of the verdict which must follow it became only more and more certain, till at last the very barriers and restraints that held Gabrielle Penmore prisoner seemed actually to drop away from her as the old man spoke, and leave her free and unshackled.

The faces of men and women in the court wore an altered expression now; their attitude, so to speak, was more easy, their breath came more freely, as if the verdict were already given. Nay, the report that all was going well got beyond the limits of the court, and was carried to the very people in the street outside; and when at last the accents of the judge, which had latterly sunk very low, ceased altogether, when the jury, hardly waiting to be questioned, without retiring, almost without a word of consultation together, returned their verdict of "Not guilty," no one in court but felt that the words were a mere form, necessary indeed to be uttered, yet only dealing with a happy but foregone conclusion.

The tumult which followed this announcement that the troubles of Gabrielle were at an end, and that the cloud which had hung over her was in a moment dispelled, was not to be repressed. Even in the awful precincts of a court of justice it was impossible, for the moment, to restrain

the long pent-up emotion which now demanded to have its way. From mouth to mouth the good news passed, and the words of the verdict echoed through the hall so quickly that there was hardly any appreciable lapse of time before the cheers of the people without the court proclaimed to those within that the happy tidings had reached them also.

That day on which the trial of Gabrielle Penmore came to an end had been one of those which, beginning in great splendour, had become clouded over to some extent as the afternoon advanced. But now, when the short daylight was near its end, there was another change; the sun broke out once more before setting, and all things within its reach were in a moment turned to gold. It is not easy for the sunlight to find its way into that grim court-house in the Old Bailey, but there were crevices even here through which certain of these golden rays managed to penetrate; and still more, there was a sudden increase of the volume of light which filled the building, and a change in the colour of that light, which conveyed to the senses of all who were there assembled the knowledge that the mist-clouds had cleared away, and that once again the sun was shining down upon the world. There was no one present in the place at that time who failed to notice the change, and few who did not receive from it a distinct gratification. Those earth-born vapours which had been spread between mankind and that which typifies to us the very glory of God had passed away, and once again there was nothing but the blessed air of heaven between the World and the Sun which shone upon it.

Say what we may, we are all affected by such a change as this. Reason about it as you will, there is a special happiness which the sunshine brings with it wherever it appears. The sun shines, it is true, on the wicked as well as on the good. Vice, and crime, and pain, and sorrow, cease not from off the world when the sun's rays are on it. There are felons working out their life-long sentences, there are criminals plotting fresh deeds of infamy, and there are sick people writhing on their beds in agony when the sun shines, just as there are when it is hidden from view. All this we know with that cold knowledge which is of the intellect alone. The heart will have nothing to say to those highly reasonable convictions, but cleaves, in spite of them, to a creed of its own—a creed in which there are more articles than we are most of us aware of, and one of the most prominent of which is this—that sunshine and happiness are closely allied, and that the clouds which darken the earth have some unexplained connexion with the sorrows to which man is born.

At all events, there were not wanting those who, on this particular day of which we are speaking, felt that it was a good thing that the sun should have come out just at the moment when Gabrielle's innocence was proclaimed aloud.

Just as the trial which has occupied so many pages of this narrative was virtually over, before

those last words which brought it formally to an end were uttered, so now this story may be fairly stated to have reached its termination, although some few last words remain yet to be spoken before Reader and Author part company.

That verdict which, once pronounced, made Gabrielle a free woman, which threw open her prison doors and left her at liberty once more, was hardly heard or understood by her whom it chiefly affected. As she stood to receive it, all things swam before her eyes, and the tumult in the court was to her a dim unreal thing which she could not understand. She knew that all was well, but it was a joy that frightened her in its excess. The extremes had met, and she felt some such sickness coming over her as might have attended a different verdict. She could only look across to where she knew her husband was, with a strange half smile, and she knew that he too was looking at her, and signing to her how happy they were. She knew, too, that all eyes were fixed upon her, and that there were even some of those quite near her who made as if they would have taken her by the hand. By-and-by she came also to know that there was a sudden silence in the place, and that the old judge was speaking again.

She heard faintly, incompletely, as she saw. But still she knew that what the judge was saying was mingled with some distant sound of many voices cheering in the street without. Those about her told her that his lordship was addressing her herself, and she tried hard to listen, but could only do so very imperfectly. There were ladies crying as the judge spoke, and some, as Gabrielle thought, were even carried out of court.

She listened, she strained her worn-out attention, and wondered within herself that she heard so little, or understood so ill. She did, however, understand something of what was said. She knew that the old man addressed her in words full of sympathy and respect. He told her that the verdict which had just been given, and in which he entirely concurred, not only set her free and exonerated her from the charge which had been brought against her, but that it reinstated her character, which had been so unhappily and unjustly assailed, leaving her without stain and without reproach. She had passed through a martyrdom, he could call it nothing else, and come out of the ordeal victorious. He said something, too, about not wishing to detain her longer from the rest of which she must stand in such earnest need, and then—then—he ceased to speak, or she to hear, which was it?

They bore her away, for she had fainted, to a room where there was fresher air, and where it was very quiet. Gilbert was there, too, and was bending over her when she came to herself. "Am I to go home?" she asked. For she was still hardly herself, and could not yet believe that she was free. That strange horrible nightmare which had lasted so long, was it possible that she had really awokened from it?

And now there came a messenger in search of Gilbert. The old judge had sent for him. If he could spare a few moments, the justice would

be glad to see him in his own private room. Here the old man addressed the young one in terms of the warmest congratulation and sympathy. He spoke highly of the manner in which the defence had been conducted, and of Penmore's courage in undertaking it. He even predicted great things for the young barrister's future, promising that he would most certainly keep his eye upon him, and making Gilbert promise in turn that if any occasion should ever offer in which he—the justice—could help him, he would always remember that he had a friend at hand who would only be too glad to serve him. The justice would not keep him now, as there were sacred claims upon every moment of his time, but begged that he might see him again very shortly.

As Penmore came out of the justice's room, he fell at once into the hands of a group of attorneys who were waiting to catch him. These gentlemen—and Mr. Craft was among the foremost of them—were eager to congratulate him, and plied him with offers of employment whenever he should be ready to take it. Nay, one of them did actually, then and there, thrust a brief into his hand, retaining him upon the spot, and Gilbert found it in his pocket hours afterwards where he had thrust it away, not knowing very well what he was doing.

"I'll tell you what, Mr. Penmore," quoth Craft, as they were about to part company, "you was right about it, sir, and I was wrong. You've got the head of a lawyer, and, what I didn't think, the tongue of a lawyer too. And as to your foreign accent, it don't stand in your way a bit, and after the first few sentences, and when you begin to warm to your work, hang me if one thinks of it at all."

Gilbert broke away from this worthy gentleman and his colleagues as quickly as he could. His heart was literally charged with pent-up feeling, and he could not speak. One thing, and one thing only, he could think of; it was his longing to be alone—alone with Gabrielle. Nothing but that could be thought of now. Nothing else was tolerable.

It came at last—the time when they could be alone. For a while it was thought better that they should remain within the precincts of the court, the crowd being so great outside, and likely to recognise them. And it was not till it had got to be quite dark that at last they were got out at a side-door and smuggled away in a cab. Ah, those cabs! always ready. Their aid is called in, in all sorts of emergencies, of joy and sorrow. The man who is summoned to a death-bed far away dashes off to the railway station in a cab, and he who, after long years of absence, returns home to loving friends, hurries away from the terminus, as the other hurried to it—still in a cab. It was in a cab that Gabrielle was taken from her home to a prison, and it is in a cab that she travels now from the prison to her home.

They are together and alone at last, and so we will for the time leave them. The heaviness, endured for the night, is past, and the morning joy has come. On such joy we have

no right to intrude. What pen could deal with it, even were it right to attempt to do so? We can fancy their speechless happiness, but we will not speak of it. These two wished to be alone with their enormous joy, and surely they shall have their wish.

CHAPTER XXXVII. THE SUN COMES OUT.

THERE was one person, and one person only, to whom the issue of that trial with which we have so long been occupied, not only failed to bring any satisfaction, but caused, on the contrary, an acute and sudden anguish, such as might move our pity if it did not excite rather our feelings of aversion and horror. Jane Cantanker remained still about the court after her evidence had been given, eagerly listening to, and closely watching, all that was said and done. She was there when Gilbert commenced his speech for the defence, and she smiled with contempt as she listened to its confident tone. She was there when Vampi gave his evidence, and as he spoke, and as the other witnesses for the defence told, each one, his tale, there crept in upon her heart a sort of doubt—arising there for the first time—about the issue of the trial. She would not entertain that doubt, however. She put it away from her by main force. Had it not been evident all along how the thing was to end. It was hardly to be a trial at all. A conviction and a sentence; all things pointing one way from the beginning. The reply of the prosecution gave her a sort of horrible comfort again. Yes, yes, it was as she had thought. That momentary doubt of hers had been an impertinence. How was it she had ever listened to it? The prosecutor knew better, of course, and how finely he was demolishing that trumpery attempt at a defence.

But when the end drew near, and it began to be evident which way the verdict would go, when this merciless woman saw that the event was likely to turn out so differently from what she had anticipated, then, indeed, such rage and disappointment took possession of her as a tigress might feel in seeing the hunter who had destroyed her cubs escape out of her reach. She listened with a sort of incredulous eagerness. She questioned those about her, as if doubting the evidence of her own senses. She asked if it was possible that there was any chance for the prisoner, if it could be that they were going to suffer that murderer to escape? The people whom she thus addressed stared at her in astonishment. They could not understand her. "I wish," said one man to whom she had spoken in such language, "I wish I had a thousand pounds depending on her getting off. And as to 'murderess,' she's no more a murderer than you are yourself, and perhaps not so much," he added, in a lower key, for the edification of a friend.

Jane Cantanker did not heed his words. She became more and more excited, and when at last the verdict was given, and she knew that her enemy was free, she lost all self-control, and screamed aloud that her mistress had been murdered, and that her death should be avenged,

though it should be by her hands who spoke the words. In the tumult that, as we have seen, followed the giving of the verdict, her wild outcry was not heard. She fought and tore her way among the crowd to get out of the court, and those who came in her path fell on one side to let her pass, believing, as Cornelius Vampi had done before, that this terrible woman was mad.

Her violence, her menaces, her fury, continued when she got outside. She howled forth the story of her mistress's wrongs in unintelligible words. She called on the bystanders to revolt against such gross and monstrous injustice, and to help her to take vengeance upon this woman who was escaping before their very eyes—in a word, her demeanour was so wild, and her threats and denunciations were so alarming, that it became necessary at last for the police who were about the neighbourhood of the court to interfere.

The efforts of these to keep her quiet were in no degree successful. Indeed, she seemed now to be more violent than ever. She accused the police of a neglect of duty. They, like the rest, were playing her false. If they suffered that woman to go free, they would be letting loose a murderer on the world.

While she was thus raving, it chanced that the same constable came up who had encountered her before, outside the walls of Newgate. "You told me you would keep her safe," she cried, at sight of the man, recognising him instantly. "You promised me that she should not escape, and now you are going to let her slip through your fingers. Good ones, you are, to look after the public safety."

The constable who had seen her before, talked aside with his colleagues.

"She's a poor mad creetur," he said, keeping his eye upon her. "I've seen her before; she's been on the lurk about here for some time past."

The men talked about it awhile longer, till a sergeant of police coming up, and hearing what they had to say, decided that it would be the wisest course to have her removed at once to some place of security.

"She'll be doing a mischief otherwise to somebody or other," he said, "or maybe to herself."

It seemed so likely, that no time was lost in carrying out the officer's suggestion, and the wretched woman was removed, struggling and appealing to the crowd for succour to the last. No one interfered, however, for the report had got about that she was only a poor crazy woman; and indeed the people assembled in the Old Bailey considered that there was sufficient proof of that fact in what their own eyes and ears told them. Mad, evidently mad.

Alas, and were they right? Was this conclusion, arrived at by so many, a just one after all? Had these recent events turned her brain? The dwelling, as she had lately done, upon one fixed idea night and day incessantly, had that been too much for her? Her love for her mistress, her grief at the loss she had sustained,

her wild increasing thirst for vengeance, had these conflicting passions, seething and working without intermission in her head, destroyed the balance of her mind, and upset at last her reason?

Such was the opinion of many persons well qualified to judge in such matters. It was the opinion of the magistrate before whom she was taken. It was the opinion of the medical officer who examined her, and it was the opinion of the authorities at the county lunatic asylum, to which she was at length consigned.

Poor unhappy creature. It was too true. The force of these terrible emotions indulged in to an excess, and to the exclusion of all other thoughts, the want of rest, the neglect of all things that mind and body need to keep them in health, had done their dreadful work, and this uneducated intellect had at length altogether given way. For some time Jane Cantanker remained a dangerous maniac, her case one of the worst in the asylum. The deranged mind retained, unhappily, that one fixed idea which lay at the root of its distortion—the desire for vengeance. This varied not. Be the inconsistencies and follies which succeeded one another in the wretched woman's mind as various and incongruous as they might, there was always at least consistency, nay, something of coherence, in this. Her story never varied. Her mistress whom she had loved was dead, had been murdered by one Gabrielle Penmore, and must be speedily and completely avenged. She would repeat this story over to herself or to others a hundred times a day, and would concoct as many schemes for carrying her vengeance out, brooding over them by herself, or consulting others as to their feasibility, whenever she could get a listener.

Among those who visited this asylum from time to time, seeking for tidings of its unhappy inmates, there was one lady who came only to inquire for this particular patient, Jane Cantanker, and who showed a marked anxiety to hear of her condition. She would ask eagerly at such times if there were any change in the state of the patient, if there was any prospect of amelioration, and begged that if there was anything she could do that might make the patient's life less terrible, they would tell her, that she might do it. She even threw out some hints about her wish to see this woman, if it might be possible. But the authorities, when they heard of this—and the doctor, who knew the patient more than all—were peremptory in their refusal. For the lady who made this request was that same Gabrielle Penmore whom this dangerous lunatic was for ever denouncing in her ravings.

At last it seemed as if the excessive violence of this woman's frenzy was beginning to wear itself out—to wear itself out along with the body of the poor creature whom it had possessed, so that she got to be quieter altogether, and her violent fits got to be fewer and further between. Gabrielle had one day taken that photograph of the late Miss Carrington, which has already done service in the course of this narrative, to

the asylum, and had left it there to be shown or not to the patient as the proper authorities might think best. It was decided at last to give it to her, and strangely enough, the possession of this portrait appeared to calm, rather than excite her. She would sit gazing upon it as a devotee might regard the image of some favourite saint, and would thrust it away into some place of security if any one approached her, as though she feared that it might be taken from her.

But just in proportion as the mental condition of Jane Cantanker showed some signs of improvement, so did her bodily health give way and fail. The body's strength declined day by day, almost hour by hour, and those who knew well the phenomena of such cases, foretold confidently that it would not be long before this woman died; but predicted also that, as the end drew near, the mind, whose faculties had been so terribly distorted, would surely be restored to reason.

And so indeed it proved. Imperfectly at first—just as in the sacred narrative the blind man recovering his sight, "saw men as trees walking"—so imperfectly her slowly recovering reason received the true images of the events which had passed, but received them more completely, and saw them with less distortion, as continually the mind of the poor woman grew clearer, and gained with each succeeding day increase of strength, till at the last it came about that she understood all, and knew all, as the reader understands and knows, and praying that if it were possible she might see Gabrielle before she died, was ministered to at the end of her days by the woman whom she had hated and persecuted, and yielded up the ghost, with a face bending over her which might have been the face of an angel.

She died with that portrait of the mistress whom she had loved clasped firmly in her hand, and it was Gabrielle still, who, when all was over, begged earnestly that it might not be taken away from her.

What remains to be told?

Not much now. If the reader imagines that any of those remarks of a disparaging sort which were called forth in the course of the trial just reported, and which bore reference to the favourite pursuits of our friend Cornelius Vampi, served, in any degree, to lower the art mystic in the esteem of that illustrious man, I can only say that the reader is mistaken most grievously. True to his principles as of old, that small observatory of his, which to some might seem a poor common-place garret, is still to him an enchanted chamber, while that window from which he looks out upon the stars, is still for him a door of communication through which the messages reach him from the unseen world. For him, the moon is a great deal more than a world of desolate mountains and barren valleys—a chaos of extinct volcanoes. For him, the planets are something other than mighty spheres hanging in the void, sustained by forces whose nature men can guess at, obedient in their

movements to ascertained laws. For him, there are still good influences, and evil, in the heavenly bodies, which act upon the destinies of the sons of men.

Ah, let him be. There are plenty of us wise ones who are altogether above these small childishnesses, or who indulge them in other, and perhaps less harmless forms. There are plenty of us to represent the matter-of-fact interest. Plenty given up to the accumulation of wealth, and other sensible practical pursuits. If we hold the art mystic but in light esteem, if we believe not in our friend's astrological pretensions, after all we need not go to him; yet let us bear him no grudge nevertheless. For the benefit of those who are differently constituted, and who, like Mr. Lethwaite, take a certain interest in matters supernatural, it is only right that I should mention that our sage may still be consulted even in these enlightened days, and will construct a horoscope for the reader to-morrow, on the most approved principles, if the reader can only find him out.

Vampi is still the oracle of the poor in his neighbourhood, and is still able to do a vast deal of good among them. He is still gloriously happy, so much so that he is obliged at times to have recourse, as of old, to the scrubbing-brush next his skin, to act as a kind of ballast. He is still fat, and florid, and healthy, with a countenance that it does you good to look on. There is but one thing changed about him, and that, after all, is connected entirely with his business arrangements. Since the day when he learned the fate of Diana Carrington, he has ceased to keep poisons as part of his stock in trade. Never will he sell poison again, be it opium, or whatever else, to any human soul.

No, not even to that favoured friend and client, Mr. Julius Lethwaite, if he were—which is most unlikely—to make application for a dose. This gentleman has by no means given up the practice of consulting the oracle, as interpreted by the gifted Cornelius, though nothing will induce him to confess that he really believes in the astrologer's powers. His visits, however, to the observatory are as frequent as of old, nor has even Jonathan Goodrich anything to say against the philosopher since the great day when he did such glorious service to the cause of justice, and helped to save the life of Gabrielle Penmore.

Mr. Lethwaite's principles remain much the same as ever, and he still challenges mankind to produce before him a single action done with an entirely clean motive. "Love of approval," and "the desire to have a finger in the pie," are, according to him, the great mainsprings to which most so-called good actions are traceable. His own recent exertions in behalf of his friends, the hero and heroine of this tale, he has, in every case, traced back with considerable skill to motives which are, to him, entirely satisfactory in their unsatisfactoriness. He still meets occasionally with instances of conduct which it is difficult to reconcile with his theory, and when, after a while, it came to his knowledge what Gabrielle had done in sooth-

ing the last hours of the woman who had so hated and injured her—then, indeed, he owned himself fairly puzzled. “The exception, which proves the rule,” he said at last, evading the difficulty.

With regard to our friend’s worldly affairs, it must be acknowledged that they are still involved in great uncertainty. The recent improvement in the aspect of American affairs has not yet led to the complete settlement of all the commercial difficulties which existed during the war. Whether that firm of Lethwaite and Goodrich will ever flourish in the city of London, remains to be seen, and the uncertainty by which that question is surrounded it is not at present in the power of the author to set at rest. Meanwhile, the senior partner in that, at present, mythical firm, continues to drum his way to musical fame night after night, and has already attained to such perfection in his peculiar branch of art, that the occasions are now rare indeed on which his leader is obliged to check his ardour with even so much as a reproachful glance.

CONCLUSION.

THE last words which are to bring this story to a close alone remain to be spoken. Then we arrive at the end. If this tale, instead of being written, had been told *vivā voce* to a circle of listeners, there would, now that the crisis is past, be a sort of buzz of talk about the circumstances of the narrative, and certain questions would infallibly be asked by some of those who had heard the tale narrated. We must be ready now with answers to any such possible questions, though, in truth, there remains not much more to be said.

There is a very old device of a fabulous and heraldic nature with which the reader is perhaps acquainted. It represents a bird, something of the eagle type, its head thrown back, and looking upward, its wings flung out in violent action, and the lower part of its body enveloped in the fire from which it is rising. This is the Phœnix, and the motto attached to the device is a very fine one. As you look upon the radiant creature, more glorious for the fiery trial through which it has passed, and rising magnificent out of the furnace, that motto, “*Ex flammis clarior*,” seems to ring in your ears, wonderful in its appropriateness and beauty. “Brighter out of the flames.” More splendid because of that fierce ordeal, you say to yourself, and then you think of trouble and its ennobling influence, of some such case as this with which we have been all this time occupying ourselves.

For brighter, beyond a doubt, and more glorious, have those two—that husband and wife whose fortunes we have followed so closely—emerged from the flame which has passed over them. That trouble is over now, and a season of great happiness follows it.

Not that either Gilbert Penmore or his wife were swift to recover from the after-effects of the suffering which they underwent. They have come out of the fire, no doubt, and are safe, but the flames have hurt them, nevertheless. The

flames have burnt them not a little, and they carry scars about them which tell of bitter sufferings endured in the furnace. It was long before either of them could bear even to think of what had been; but in due time there came to her who had chiefly suffered, a source of consolation so great that it seemed to obliterate the very memory of the past, and caused it to appear at last like some half-forgotten dream. In ministering to a creature wholly helpless, wholly dependent on her, Gabrielle, the mother, absorbed in this new and wholesome interest, almost ceased to remember what she had suffered in the old time—as it soon seemed—when her child was not yet born to her.

But before that event took place, many things happened to distract Gabrielle’s attention from the memory of what she had gone through. Friends sprang up on every side for this new martyr. Comparative strangers who could allege some such excuse as having once known her father or mother, came to call upon her, and some even who had no such excuse, and could only plead their anxiety to show some attention to one who had suffered in so uncommon a way. Immediately after the trial, the wife of that old judge in whom Gabrielle had felt such trust, came to her, and asked leave to be her friend. She proved so always.

It has been mentioned in a previous chapter, that when Governor Descartes and his wife heard of their daughter’s terrible position, and of the peril that hung over her, they lost no time in making the necessary arrangements for a journey to England. The inevitable preparations and the journey itself, however, took some weeks, and, happily for them, the trial had come to a good end before they arrived. To see her parents again after so long a separation, was in itself no small delight to Gabrielle. And she saw them under happy circumstances. Between her and her mother there had till this time been an estrangement ever since Gabrielle’s marriage. All such estrangement was now over, and the reconciliation between mother and daughter was complete. Trouble draws people wonderfully together, and we are not disposed to think severely of one who has newly escaped from a deadly peril. With her father, Gabrielle had always been a favourite, and the old gentleman’s delight at seeing his daughter again, and that under such circumstances, was very affecting to see. The old governor talked very big about compensation, and actions for false imprisonment, and other legal proceedings in connexion with the late trial. But Gabrielle shook her head, and taking her father’s hand in hers, besought him that the memory of that past horror might not be stirred again.

And now the time came when Gilbert, too, was to be rewarded for all his patient endurance and unrequited toil. That interview between him and the old judge, which took place immediately after the great trial was over, was not without its results. It was talked about in law circles. The old judge and the young barrister were not alone at that time; all sorts of official and other persons having occasion to be in the

room where the interview took place, waiting to speak with the justice on matters connected with his function. These spread the report far and wide of what had passed, not failing to exaggerate the praises which had been bestowed on the young lawyer, and the promises of assistance made by the worthy justice.

Such help, however, hardly came to be wanted. Gilbert Penmore had now, as the French say, given his proofs. He had shown that he could conduct a case, that he could keep his wits about him under circumstances the most trying that could possibly be conceived. It had been seen that his foreign accent was not a thing that need by any means stand in his way; a trifle, exciting some small amount of notice at first, but forgotten before a dozen sentences were spoken. Work poured in upon him faster than he could take it, and a time came when Gabrielle reminded him with a smile of what she had once—as the reader perhaps remembers—said in jest, that she would “certainly commit a crime some day or other, in order that he might conduct her defence and win a great name.”

In short, this young couple soon began to prosper exceedingly. They did not remain in their old abode, where such heavy troubles had befallen them, but got away to new and pleasant quarters, with which no painful memories were associated. It is only right, however, to mention, that wherever they went the faithful Charlotte accompanied them, and made herself useful in a great variety of ways.

But why do I go on? The essential is told. Who reads the last words of a story, or listens to the final speeches of a play—when the box-keepers stand ready with their canvas coverings to throw over the silk and gilding, and pater-familias gets his young people together with prodigious noise, and wraps them well up before they face the night air?

The scenes will all have been shifted by the time that our curtain rises again next week, and a new piece will be presented, with fresh scenery and appointments, and an entirely new cast of characters.

THE END OF “AT THE BAR.”

THE PLEASURES OF ILLNESS.

It is sometimes both pleasant and profitable to be ill.

You will observe I say “sometimes;” and, that I may not give any habitual sufferer occasion to shake a sad head in bitter derision of my postulate, I will add, “under certain conditions.” If you be a person who “enjoys bad health,” you will be inclined rather to say, with gentle sarcasm, that it is both pleasant and profitable to be sometimes well; if you be also poor and friendless, my philosophy will sound like mockery. I cannot offer much consolation to such as you—I wish I could—but I disclaim the imputation, which might be cast upon me, of being indifferent to your case, or of being like the cruel man who talks

rapturously of rich feasts in the hearing of the hungry and the destitute. There are wounds too deep for my philosophy to salve, and to such wounds I will not presume to apply it.

It is to the strong, to those who fare sumptuously upon good health every day, that I address myself when I sing the praises of illness. I am not going to deal with the subject in the abstract. Not at all. I have just now been suffering from severe illness, and I deliberately say, that I enjoyed it.

You are mistaken if you think that it was merely a headache, a cold, or an attack of bile. It was an attack of acute rheumatism, and that is a complaint which even connoisseurs in illness will allow to be something worth talking about. I was laid up for nearly a month, I suffered continuous agony for two days and two nights, and during the rest of the time the pain, though mitigated in violence, continued to gnaw at my bones and muscles, rendering me at times perfectly helpless. To complete the statement of the case, my occupation is that of an author, and the chief seat of the disorder—which is a very mild word for it—was my right arm, including my right hand!

Yet I took pleasure in that attack of rheumatism; it did me a great deal of good. I profited by it. Before you call me a canting hypocrite, one word. I am not one of those who like to be despised, who rejoice in afflictions, who love to mortify myself, or to be mortified. As a miserable sinner that attack of rheumatism did not, so far as I am aware, do me any good whatever. In that respect I do not profit by whipping. I don’t want the rod to remind me of my lessons. No. In the first place, I rejoiced in that rheumatism because it gave me a holiday. I could not have ventured to take a holiday if I had been well, but the rheumatism compelled me to take one. I could not write with my own hand, and I never tried dictation. So I made up my mind at once not to attempt any work. If it had been merely laziness or mental vacuity I should have struggled against it, and overcome it, as I had done often before. But it was downright physical incapacity. Work was impossible. I had orders for I don’t know how many hundreds of bricks, but it was worse than being simply without straw—I had no hands.

It was just this having so many bricks to make that made me welcome the rheumatism. In these days we all work too much, and too fast. And it is the pace that kills—especially men who race with their brains. The daily, weekly, and monthly press is the most inexorable of all nigger-drivers. It has a lash of iron, and it lays it on by steam. When you *can* answer its crack you must, and continue to do so day after day, and week after week. It will allow of no intermittent efforts. You must run on, or fall out of the race. I did not fall out voluntarily; I was knocked out; and when I recovered the blow a little, I was thankful for it.

What a relief it was, when I had turned off the steam, and stopped the mill in the brain! It was not grinding very fine corn, perhaps, but

still it was grinding away as hard as millstones could go. And oats, I believe, wear out the material sooner than wheat. If I had not been knocked out of the race, I could not voluntarily have fallen out for a rest, until some time next autumn. In this way busy men may be thankful for an occasional illness, to save them from themselves.

I wonder if I shall find many readers to sympathise with me when I say that a continuance of good health sets me speculating in this manner—"What a long spell of health I have had! Half the winter gone and I have not caught cold—haven't had a cough, nor an attack of indigestion for ever so long. Surely I shall have something the matter with me soon." It is almost like longing to be ill. But nothing astonishes a weakly person, who has been accustomed to illness, so much as an unusually long period of good health. It is something he did not expect; it is like a gift to him. Robust persons who have never been accustomed to physical suffering, will find it difficult to understand this feeling. Their wonder is that they should ever be ill at all. I have noticed that the moral effect of illness upon the strong man is the moral effect of health upon the weak man. When a strong man is stricken down, he takes to his prayers. But the time when the weak man's thoughts are most elevated towards spiritual things is when he is well. The latter is too thankful to Heaven for its abundant mercies to begin whining the moment he is laid upon a bed of sickness. To my mind, that which induces a spirit of thankfulness is the best chastener of the heart. It is not a scourge, but a purifier. I have no belief in the rod, either moral or physical. When I am in health, and have the full enjoyment of all my faculties, and when the sun shines, and all nature is beautiful around me, then I am good. I cannot say that my heart is touched in the same way by affliction and gloom. It is not then in a spiritual way that I profit by illness, but simply because it enables me to throw off my cares as I throw off my clothes, and put my mind to rest with my body.

To descend to some common-place particulars, in illustration of the pleasures of illness, I will mention first of all the delight of being able to think without a purpose. When I am well, all my thinking must take a practical direction. I have no time to indulge in loose fancy. Whatever thoughts may enter my head I must mould and shape them for use. I must parcel them out, and pigeon-hole them. And there is the involute process of thinking about thoughts, overhauling the aforesaid mental pigeon-holes to see that everything is ready to hand, a process which is very wearing and painful. But sitting here by the fireside, utterly incapacitated, I give free rein to my fancy, and set myself to think about nothing. And when you don't try to think, what pleasant thoughts enter your head unbidden! You may call upon the divine Nine, or any other source of inspiration, until you are hoarse, without bringing down the pleasant fancy which pops upon you unasked!

for, like a fairy's gift. You sit by the fire with your feet among the cinders, staring vacantly at the coals, and a vision of beauty reveals itself in the flame. These are the pleasant day-dreams which the mind enjoys when it has an opportunity of playing the idler.

Another pleasure of illness is found in the opportunity which it affords you of reading books. Busy men, in these days, cannot afford time to read any but a very few of the best books. And perhaps no class has so little time for reading of a fanciful kind as the literary class. An author or a journalist is obliged to confine himself to works of the highest fame. He has just time enough, and barely, to make himself acquainted with the thoughts and feelings of the *di majora*. The *minores* he must neglect altogether, until he is introduced to them by the leisure which is enforced by illness. What a deal of pleasant and profitable reading of this kind I got through during that month when I was laid up with rheumatism! At such times, too, one has leisure and inclination for old favourites, for Homer and Horace, Aristophanes and Terence, Don Quixote and Tristram Shandy. One cannot make up his mind to read good books when his head is full of business, or when he is in a hurry. I would not insult a favourite author of mine by reading him on the top of an omnibus or in a railway train. I give him all the honours of a cleanly swept hearth and a newly trimmed lamp. I wash my hands, I anoint my head, I put my mind in full dress, and then I am ready to receive him. But it is only when I am ill that I can render him full honour in this respect.

Not the least of my pleasures of illness is derived from the daily visits of the doctor. It is not every one, I know, who delights to have the doctor in the house; but I do. My doctor and I are peculiarly situated towards each other. We are on visiting terms, we belong to the same club, we go out on the spree together—very mild sprees; a visit to the theatre now and then, a pic-nic in the summer, an occasional Covent Garden supper, with harmony—we move in the same set, and know each other's tastes and habits intimately. My doctor knows that I believe very little in physic, and he wisely abstains from taxing the little faith I have in that regard. Besides, he is one of those sensible fellows who have great confidence in the virtues of juicy mutton and generous wine. When I call him in to prescribe for my cold, which I feel assured is going to lay me up for a week or two, does he order me physic and slops? No; he says, "Drink two glasses of sherry at once, have a good nourishing dinner, and go to bed early; meantime I'll send you something; but keep yourself warm, and take plenty of nourishment." And then we drop the professional subject, and talk about the last new book, or the last new play, until I quite forget that I am a patient, and he quite forgets that he is my medical adviser—for at parting he merely alludes to my malady with a "by-the-by."

As regards physic there is a tacit understand-

ing between us. My doctor knows, as I have said, that I have no great belief in pills and draughts, and he does not insist upon my swallowing much of that sort of stuff; but he sends the little bottles and boxes as a matter of form, and I receive them as a matter of form; and so we consider that we have done what is courteous towards each other as doctor and patient. I get well, and we tacitly give the physic the credit of the cure, though there are all the little bottles and boxes in a row on the mantelpiece untouched, except, perhaps, one or two "taken" in compliment to the art; just as one takes wine when challenged at dinner in obedience to the rules of etiquette. But though I have little or no faith in my physic, I believe in my doctor. He gives me sound advice, he tells me what to eat, drink, and avoid, he cheers me up, and feeds me up, and, what is most to the purpose, he gets me well. I have always had the greatest respect for his sense and candour ever since he admitted the virtues of a certain dose which I prescribed for myself. I was in fearful agony with rheumatic pains, and, physic being in vain, I drank off two stiff glasses of brandy-and-water. The brandy allayed the pain. I told my doctor so, and he said, "I have no doubt of it; brandy is an invaluable medicine, if people would take it only as a medicine."

But of course a doctor could not go about prescribing brandy-and-water. If he did, he would be open to the suspicion of being a travelling agent for a spirit-house.

I should be quite unhappy if I did not find occasion to call in my doctor at least once a year. He gives me a turn, and I feel bound to give him one. One good turn, you know, deserves another. I go to the doctor's house, and I find my book upon his table. He goes to see my plays, he takes in the periodicals to which I contribute. When I have been in good health for a long time, and the doctor says to me, "That is a capital book of yours," or "I like that article of yours very much," it goes to my conscience. Here he is, taking me in regularly every week, and I have not taken him in for months. When I find the account so heavy against me, I am almost tempted deliberately to go and sit in a draught and catch cold. So I was quite rejoiced the other day when that attack of rheumatism came on. Now, thought I, I shall be able to take in the doctor in daily numbers, and praise his articles. Here is a little work of his, each leaf containing an iron powder, from the bi-daily perusal of which I rise greatly refreshed. I make an exception in favour of this vigorous work, and swear by it, without any mental reservation whatever.

Thackeray, in one of the pleasantest of his satires—the continuation of Ivanhoe—makes his Wamba sing :

Forty times over let Michaelmas pass,
Grizzling hair the brain doth clear;
Then you know a boy is an ass,
Then you know the worth of a lass,
Once you have come to forty year.

Now, as to the worth of a lass, I think there are occasions when you may be brought to have a full appreciation of *that*, before you come to forty year. This is another of my pleasures of illness—to be tended with gentle hands, to be comforted with gentle words, to be pillow'd on a soft breast throbbing with love and forgiveness and tender pity. Then, when my man's strength is gone, and I am as weak and helpless as any child, I know how selfish men are, and what a deep pure well of devotion is a woman's heart. When we are full of health and strength we go away from home-women, go to our dinners, and our clubs, and amusements, leaving them to their dull domestic routine, sometimes keeping them waiting and watching for us through the weary night. They do certainly give us a bit of their mind occasionally—they would be perfect angels if they did not; but when sickness strikes us down, the harsh word is hushed into a whisper of sympathy, the angry eye melts with an expression of tenderness and pity. And with all their little injuries struggling with love upon their lips, they do not permit themselves to utter more than the gentle sarcasm :

"You cannot go to the club now, can you, dear?"

The man who has never been ill, has yet to become acquainted with some of the purest pleasures of existence.

A ROYAL POET.

KING OSCAR of Sweden is one of the most accomplished monarchs of Europe. His paintings, principally depicting the fine scenery of his country, are extremely beautiful. From his poems—they now lie before us in three small volumes—we give the two following, translated, at the request of the Queen-Dowager, by Mary Howitt. They were read this last summer before the court, by Herr Alberg, who gave in Stockholm a series of English readings—the English language being at this time greatly admired and studied in Sweden :

THE HEART'S HOME.

Where is thy home? Thus to my heart appealing
I spake. Say thou who hast had part
In all my inmost being's deepest feeling,
Where is thy proper home? Tell me, my heart!
Is it where peaceful groves invite to leisure,
And silvery brooklets lapse in easy measure?
No, no, my heart responded, no!

Where is thy home? Amid the tempests' anger,
And torrents leaping wild from rock to rock,
Where the bold hunter finds delight in danger,
And bleeding victims fall beneath his stroke?
Or is it 'mid the artillery's thundering rattle,
The clash of swords, the roar and rush of battle?
Calmly my heart made answer, No!

Where is thy home? Perchance where tropic
splendour,
In golden luxury of light, calls forth
The purple grape; perchance, 'midst roses tender
Thou revellest in the beauty of the South.

Is that thy home, beneath the palm-tree shadows,
And ever-verdant summer's flowery meadows?

Still, still my heart made answer, No!

Where is thy home? Is it 'mid icebergs hoary,
The crags and snow-fields of the Arctic strand,
Where the midsummer's midnight sees the glory
Of sunset and of sunrise, hand in hand,
Where 'twixt the pine-trees gleams the snow-drift's
whiteness,

And starry night flames with auroral brightness?
But still my whispering heart said, No!

Where is thy home? Is it within *her* presence,
Whose heart responsive pulses to thy love,
Who taught of suffering the divinest essence,
When hope was dead in life's sweet myrtle grove?
Is that the home in which thy wishes centre?
Yes, of a truth, the shrine which none may enter!

But mournfully again my heart said, No!

Where is thy home? Say if perchance it lieth
In that prefigured land of love and light,
Whither, they say, the soul enfranchised flieth
When earthly bonds no longer check her flight?
Is there thy home? Those unknown realms elysian
Which shine beyond the stars, a heavenly vision?

Then first my heart made answer, Yes!

There is my home, it said, with quick emotion;
My primal home to which I am akin.
Though earthly fires may call forth my devotion,
Yet I forget not Heaven's pure flame within.
Amidst the ashes still a spark surviveth,
Which ever yearneth heavenward, ever striveth
To be with God, who is my home!

AUTUMN FAREWELL TO DROTTNINGHOLM.*

The glorious summer sun already leaneth

Towards distant lands, and that resplendent glow,
Which, late at eve, flamed upward to the zenith,
No longer now the Norrland fields shall know.
And wood and mead, which, in their vernal gladness,
Laughed out to man beneath the azure sky,
Stand wan and sere, and clouds weep tears of sadness,

And even the little birds sit silent by.

Yet still how gratefully my memory treasures
The lovely peace of each sweet summer day,
When heaven itself brought down to earth its pleasures,

And winds their warfare changed to merry play;
When flowers sent up their offering of sweetness,
As incense to the God of day and night,
And lifted to the sun their fair completeness
Obedient to the holy law of light.

But all, alas! on earth is transitory,
And laughter changes soon to sorrow's tear;
As the green herb, anon, foregoes its glory,
So man advances onward to his bier.

Yet if the faithful heart have kept in clearness
The sunny moments of the passing day,
Still shall they cast amidst autumnal dreariness
Of the lost summer a surviving ray.

Thus muse I, as my fond farewell is spoken,
Thou loveliest pearl beside the Mälär coast.
Nor shall sweet memory's bond 'twixt us be broken,
Where'er my bark on life's rough sea be tossed!
To thee my heart will yearn when sorrow shroudeth
My world of thought, and all is dark as night;
And if thick mist the future overcloudeth,
I will ascend unto the past delight.

* Drottningholm is the Versailles of Sweden.

Farewell ye hills and valleys, groves and meadows,
Where Flora scattered all her pomp abroad,
And elves amidst the full moon's lights and shadows
Traced magic rings in dances on the sward;
Thou shore, reed-garlanded, where softly stringing
His harp at eve the Necken charms the scene;
Thou wood, made musical with wild birds' singing,
And waters lapsing through the leafy screen.

Farewell thou starry eve, so oft reflected
In the still waters, where my light bark drove
The downward depth which still my gaze rejected,
Turning instead unto the heaven above;
Have thanks for all the quiet joy supernal,
Which in my heart's recess by thee was laid,
The whilst thy azure vault of truth eternal
Expanded as a blessing, o'er my head!

Farewell thou lovely scene! The heart's deep feeling

Gives forth these accents of my parting song!

Yet thou in memory wilt be sorrow's healing,
And speed the mournful winter night along;
I'll think of thee when autumn fogs are glooming,
Oh! Drottningholm, for still thy sun will shine;
Thou art to me in every season blooming,
And peaceful lilies round thy name entwine!

CARACAS TO VALENCIA.

THE next thing was to settle whether I should proceed south to Valencia, or west to San Felipe, a town about forty miles from Puerto Cabello, where it was said that General Falcon had promised to attend at the consecration of a church. On inquiry I found that the route to Felipe lay through a treeless waste, where, if I went by day, I should be exposed to a sun that no European could encounter with impunity, while at night I should infallibly be stricken down by the fever, for which the coast of the Golfo Triste is infamous. Of two European engineers, who had been out on this route a few weeks before, one had died of sun-stroke, and the other was lying at the point of death from fever at Puerto Cabello. Besides, General Falcon's movements were so uncertain, that I thought it likely he might not come after all; and so, in fact, it turned out. On the other hand, if I went to San Felipe, I could easily go on to the copper-mines of Aroa, which I was desirous of visiting. These mines were worked for a time under the superintendence of Englishmen, with good results; but unfortunately one fine day the native miners took it into their heads that they had a grievance against the foreigners, so they fell on them suddenly, split their skulls with hatchets, and decamped with their property. For this cruel and cowardly deed some of the guilty parties were afterwards executed, but the mines were for a time abandoned, and the working of them had only lately been resumed. After some consideration I resolved to send a courier with a letter to General Falcon, and proceed myself to Valencia, whence, if requisite, I could go by a less unhealthy route to San Felipe.

At four P.M. on the 12th of August, I took leave of C. and my kind host, and started with a

friend and my servant Juan for Valencia. Just before we left, a creole, who wished to curry favour with C., rode up to us upon a magnificent mule, and said that he too was going to Valencia, that he observed I was indifferently mounted, and that he would, therefore, be very glad to accompany us, and lend me his mule whenever I got tired of my own. Having made the wished-for impression on C., this rusé individual started with us, but remained in our company for only about half a mile, and then set off over the heavy sandy road at a speed which our poor beasts could not rival. I found that my mule stumbled abominably, and I inwardly resolved to exchange animals with the polite creole, for a mile or two at least, on the first opportunity. We rode on, under a terrible sun, for five miles, through a dense swampy jungle, full of blue land-crabs and snares, to Palato, where there is a miserable hovel to represent a village, and where the sea reappears, not sluggish and sleeping, as at Puerto Cabello, but breaking on wild coast in foaming surges. Here we sat down and smoked, and discussed the prospects of the railway from Puerto Cabello to San Felipe, the first station of which we knew would be at Palato, while from the same village another line would diverge to Valencia. Thus far we had gone west, but we now turned south, and began to ascend from the coast, rejoicing to emerge from the dense low jungle, through which we had hitherto been plodding. On our left, was a ravine, at the bottom of which flowed a small stream called the Rio del Ultimo Paso, or "Ne Plus Ultra River." About a mile to the east of Palato is the mouth of the Rio Agua Caliente, "Hot-water River," in which, according to Humboldt, the alligators are of uncommon size and ferocity. It is curious how these disgusting animals thrive in thermal springs, as at the Magar Talao in Lower Sindh, and other places in India.

After going a mile or two we came to a posada, and here whom should we see smoking indolently with his feet up on a bench, but our friend the creole, owner of the fine mule. As I was heartily sick of my own animal, and did not understand that creole promises meant nothing, I reminded him of his proposal, and said, "I should like to exchange mules for a mile or two." "With all my heart, señor," replied he, "but I have a little affair to settle with the landlord here. I will overtake you, before you have advanced a couple of miles; we will then not only exchange mules, but you shall, if you like, ride mine all the rest of the way to Valencia." As I rather misdoubted this arrangement, and was determined not to ride my own animal any more, I mounted Juan's in spite of his assuring me that I should lose by the change. After about half an hour we spied the courteous creole coming up at a great pace, and of course expected he would stop when he reached us. Instead of that, he had the effrontery to pass us like a flash of lightning, seeming not to

hear our calls to him to pull up, but leaving for our benefit a cloud of dust, which drove directly in our faces, and which was the sole advantage that accrued to us from our interview with this polite individual at Puerto Cabello, and the courteous promises he there made to us. Even Juan, though used to the country, was rather scandalised at his behaviour, and could not refrain from shouting after him "Picaron! Embusteró!" "Rogue, humbug," and other angry expressions, which no doubt afforded the creole immense amusement.

As we left the coast behind us the soil grew firmer, the pestilential smell ceased, and the jungle waxed higher and higher. Many lofty and beautiful trees now attracted our attention, especially palms, as the sago palm and the cocurito. Juan also pointed out to me the bread-fruit-tree—which looks in the distance as if some one had been hanging human heads on it—and the famous Palo de Vaca, or "cow-tree," which supplies a milk exactly like that of animals. There were also many fruits and flowers, very beautiful to look at, but some of them most poisonous, as the manzanilla, which resembles in appearance and pernicious effects a certain fruit that "brought death into the world and all our woe." The sun set, but a bright moon rose, and we jogged on pleasantly, though very slowly. A little after eight P.M. we saw, not quite a mile off, the lights of the village of Camburé, which is only seven miles from Palato, so tardy had been our progress, and so often had we stopped to smoke, to look at flowers and trees, and to discuss the proper line for the railway to Valencia. Seeing the village so near, I lagged behind to light another cigar: not an easy matter with the bad matches of the country. While I was absorbed in this undertaking, my mule gave a violent start, which almost sent me off my equilibrium, and began to run at a pace of which I had not before thought it capable. Pulling at the reins with both hands, I looked over my shoulder, and saw a large animal leap into the road behind me, stand for a moment or two, and then pass into the thicket on the other side. Presently a savage roar from the jungle about fifty yards to my right, told me what sort of animal it was, and set my mule galloping on towards the village, at a speed which I now did not attempt to check. In minute or two I was met by Juan, who came hurrying back to meet me. "Did you hear anything?" I asked. "Yes, yes," replied Juan, "I heard. It's a tiger, sure enough. They don't often attack men, but this one must be hungry, or he would not come so near the village; so we had better get to the posada as soon as possible." We pushed on accordingly, but before we reached the village we heard the jaguar, for such it was, roar repeatedly in the jungle behind us, and, to judge by the sound, he seemed to be following in our wake.

Camburé is a village of about forty houses, or rather hovels, in the midst of a very dense jungle, and with a deep ravine to the east. At the bottom

of this ravine runs a stream, in which there are alligators, for Humboldt saw one nine feet long near the village. On the night of our arrival the place happened to be quite full of people, some on their way to Valencia, and others, chiefly natives of St. Thomas, who had come out from Puerto Cabello for a drinking-bout. Up to the hour of our arrival, these merry folks had been bringing themselves up to the right pitch of excitement, and being now thoroughly intoxicated, they began to dance furiously to music which strongly reminded me of the Indian tom-toms. I stood for some time looking at their performances, while Juan was bargaining for a room with the landlord of the posada, whose house was already crammed, but who, at the sight of a handful of dollars, unceremoniously ejected some of his guests for our accommodation. As for the merry-makers whose proceedings I was watching, two of them would stand up at a time and dance frantically a sort of jig, with the perspiration streaming from their faces, until they were quite exhausted, when they sat, or rather tumbled down, and were succeeded by two others, who imitated their example. When I was tired of this, and of looking at some very pretty creole ladies who sat outside the door of one of the houses, dressed in white, as if for a ball, I entered the posada, which I found alive with fleas, and reeking with garlic. After a miserable dinner I turned into my hammock, but not being used to that kind of bed, I was almost immediately deposited on the floor on the other side, to the great delight of Juan, who, however, instructed me how to conduct myself so as to avoid such an ignominious ejection for the future.

Next morning we were up by four A.M., and after I had packed, and paid eight dollars for our miserable fare, and had got myself covered with black ants which bit furiously, we started. The road continued to ascend, and the hills on either side grew higher and higher, and the ravines deeper, till we came to Trincheras, or "The Trenches," a village so called, because some French freebooters, who sacked Valencia in 1677, halted there and entrenched themselves. It was twenty minutes past eight before we reached Trincheras, though it is but six miles from Camburé, and there we stopped and smoked, and I chatted with some women, who received my remarks with most extraordinary empressement, for which I was quite at a loss to account. Close to Trincheras are some very celebrated thermal springs, said by Humboldt to be the second hottest in the world. Of course we inquired about them at the posada, but, strange to say, the people could not tell us exactly where the springs were. At last, a man who was going to Valencia volunteered to guide us to them, and we set off. After riding a few hundred yards, we came to two or three cottages, all the inmates of which issued forth, and went down on their knees to me. I was petrified by this extraordinary procedure, but Juan irreverently bursting into a peal of laughter, called out, "Do you see that?

May I be hanged if they don't take you, sir, for the archbishop, who is expected here on his way to consecrate the church at San Felipe! It is your hat with the turban round it, a head-dress they have never seen before, which they take to be part of an archbishop's travelling costume."

I now began to understand why the women at the posadas had been so deferential, and was not a little dismayed at finding myself figuring as the head of the orthodox church in Venezuela.

Our volunteer guide to the hot springs, soon after we had passed these cottages, bade us alight and follow him into the jungle, which we did; but after struggling through thorns and thick bushes, and wading in muddy pools to no purpose, we had to return to the road, without being able to find the springs, minus parts of our garments, and plus pounds weight of mud, which no effort could dislodge from our boots. This failure was several times repeated, and it really seemed that, having come thousands of miles to Trincheras, we should have to quit the spot without seeing what we had heard so much about. At last a man arrived from the neighbouring cottages, and led us down to the place we wanted to see, which is but fifty yards from the road; but the jungle is so thick, that without a guide no one would be able to discover it; and it would be well if some mark to show where it is, were set up for the convenience of travellers. The springs are situated in a hollow of about one hundred yards diameter, which has evidently once been the crater of a volcano. Through this hollow flows a rivulet, two feet deep, and never less than eighteen feet wide in the greatest drought. Steam ascends from the surface of the water, the temperature of which, according to Humboldt, is above ninety degrees. In some places it must be very much above that point, for the guide stepped with his bare feet into one part that was so hot as to make him skip out again with surprising agility and a doleful countenance, swearing that he had been scalded by it. The bed of the stream is coarse-grained granite, but there is a good deal of mud. The vegetation grows quite rankly all around this Stygian water, and clusias, mimosas, and aroms especially thrive in it. At forty feet from the hot stream is a rivulet of cold water. Altogether it is a very curious place, and worthy of a more lengthened visit than we were able to pay it.

From Trincheras the road continues to ascend through a lovely forest, bright with fruits and flowers. The turns are in places very sharp, overlooking deep ravines. After three miles, we arrived at what is called the Entrada, or "entrance," which is the highest point between Puerto Cabello and Valencia, being probably about eighteen hundred feet above the sea. Half a mile beyond, the jungle ends, and the road enters a beautiful salubrious valley, about twenty miles broad, with grass and trees, as in England, but without jungle. Here we put up some fine coves of quilas. Two miles further on, we came to the village of Nagua Nagua, and, as it was half-past

ten, and the sun terribly hot, we were glad to take refuge in the posada. In the room into which they showed us, there were three very rough sofas, whereon we gladly threw ourselves, and were rather astonished, on going away, to find that we were charged for three beds, though we did but lie down for a few hours in the daytime. As for rest, that was out of the question, for the flies covered our faces and hands in countless numbers, and effectually barred sleep. At one P.M. we were called to dinner, and sat down with a goodly company of drovers and others, who were doing the journey to Valencia on foot.

As for myself, the smell of the garlic was quite enough, and I retreated, without tasting a morsel, to my sofa. Even there I was not left in peace, for fowls, dogs, and even pigs, kept wandering into the room; and in my sorties to drive out these intruders, I discovered the cause of the immense number of flies. All along the verandah in rear of the apartments the worthy posadero had hung up in rows joints of meat, some of which were quite black. The odour of these pieces of flesh overpowered even that of the adjoining stable-yard, and brought all the insects of the neighbourhood to the spot. I should have left the place without eating, had not a creole woman offered me a large sweetmeat made of *membrillo*, or "quince," which I greedily devoured. Our bill was seven dollars, or about two-and-twenty shillings, for the use of the room and the abominable food, which Juan had the courage to masticate, but the very smell of which I could not endure. At three P.M. a rumbling coach drove up, and took away the shoemaker's wife who had given me the quince, and her family; and as the road was blocked up for a bull-fight, they had to make a *détour* over such rough ground as to threaten the old vehicle with destruction at every moment. We soon followed, and rode the five miles that remained to Valencia in an hour.

The country was lovely with the richest natural vegetation, and, here and there, coffee estates and sugar plantations. There are so many trees and gardens round Valencia, that the city is almost concealed from view until it is entered. However, long before we reached the streets, we passed bevyes of pretty creole ladies, promenading or sitting in the open air, in front of posadas resembling tea-gardens in England. Among these groups, my hat with the turban still continued to create a sensation, and though they were too civilised to take me for an archbishop, the mistakes they made about me, as I afterwards heard, were scarcely less ridiculous. On arriving in Valencia, we made our way to the Gran Plaza, and alighted at a posada called La Belle Alliance, which had no upper story, and no comfortable room of any kind. I was shown into a gloomy apartment without a window, and with one great folding-door. When this door was closed, I was obliged to light a candle, but it was impossible to keep the door shut long, without being stifled. We had to wait several hours be-

fore the dinner we had ordered could be got ready, and when it did appear, although our appetites were keen, we could not induce ourselves to touch anything, except some boxes of sardines and a dish of potatoes. On going to bed, I found it impossible to sleep, from the suffocating closeness of my room, and I passed the night in vowed that as soon as morning came, I would cease to be a member of La Belle Alliance.

DADDY DODD.

JOHN BEADLE was an honest man, with a large family and a small shop. It was not a hopeful circumstance in John's position that, while his family kept on enlarging, the shop obstinately maintained its contracted dimensions; that, while there seemed to be no bounds to the race of Beadle, the business which maintained them was strictly limited. John's shop was situated in one of the many by-streets, with no main thoroughfare among them, which constitute Somers Town, and it was devoted to the sale of coals and vegetables. As a householder, John, though in a small way of business, was a person of some importance, inasmuch as he was the sole lessee of an entire tenement. It was something to boast of in that neighbourhood, but not much; for the roof which John called his own was a broken-backed roof, and covered only one floor besides the basement, which formed the emporium. The tenement seemed to be fast sinking into the earth. The impression of the beholder was that one story had already sunk, and that the others were rapidly following it; so that it seemed probable that in a few years there would be nothing visible but the broken-backed roof lying flat on the spot, a monument of departed commerce in coals. Meantime, by the agency of two upright beams and one transverse one, the broken-backed roof was kept over the heads of John and his family.

John's family consisted of his wife Martha, seven children, and Martha's old father. All these, including the old man, who was past work, and utterly without any means of his own, were dependent upon the exertions of John, aided, when urgent family affairs would permit, by his wife. John's exertions were divided between chopping firewood, taking out hundreds (more frequently half-hundreds) of coals on a truck, and "moving." The occupation of "moving" may be described as going to houses about quarter-day, wrestling with chests of drawers, sofas, four-post bedsteads, and other heavy articles of furniture, and getting very little money, but a good deal of beer. If John had been a pelican of the wilderness he might have nourished his family upon beer for a week after a moving; but he was only a man, and could do little more than find them a bit of supper with the single shilling which was generally all his reward in available currency.

The door and the window of the shop being always open, the nature and extent of John's stock in trade were patent to the world. It

consisted of about a ton of coals—which generally ran small—heaped up in a corner, a little pile of firewood, a few strings of onions, a few bunches of greens, a basket or two of potatoes, a box of red herrings, a bottle of peppermint-stick alluringly displayed with some marrowless nuts and wizened apples on a board outside the window, and a bed-wrench. This last instrument was a wonderful auxiliary to John's other resources. While the two upright beams and the single transverse beam were the support of the emporium architecturally, the bed-wrench was the prop of the emporium commercially. It was a thing not to be bought, but borrowed; and the charge for the loan of that bed-wrench was twopence. Chaldron-street was given to borrowing, and it seemed to be a street which did not lie easy in its bed, for it was always taking its bed down and putting its bed up again, the result being that John's bed-wrench was in constant and urgent demand. Such has been the eagerness to secure the instrument, that two rival applicants have been known actually to wrench each other in the effort to possess it.

One half of John's shop was occupied by the stock, the other half formed the ordinary sitting-room. This latter room had a fireplace, surmounted by a mantelshelf, on which stood several works of art in china; and its furniture consisted of two or three Windsor chairs and a small round table. Little active domesticity was ever witnessed in this department except at the close of the day, when the family, coming from the coals and the potatoes and the firewood, made a rush at the little round table, and scrambled for herrings and thick bread-and-butter and tea. At such times old Daddy, Martha's superannuated father, was to be seen sitting in an arm-chair by the side of the fire, his bald head encircled by a glory of onions, and the coals rising on his right like a distant mountain range, put in as a background to the picture. Those family banquets were sharp and short. All unnecessary conveniences of luxury, such as knives and forks, slop-basins, and the like, were dispensed with. Each one as he finished his cup of tea turned round and threw the dregs upon the heap of coals, and, when he had finished picking his herring, turned the other way and flung the bones into the fire. After the meal, Mr. Beadle was accustomed to sit down opposite old Daddy, while Martha drew up between them, and devoted herself to the mending of the family linen; but as the number of chairs was limited, the younger branches of the family usually reclined, in the classic fashion, among the coals, from contact with which they derived a swarthiness of complexion which caused them to be known in the neighbourhood as the "black Beadles." John and Martha loved their offspring dearly, and would not have had anything happen to one of them for the world; but they began to find that they were increasing both in numbers and in appetite in a ratio altogether disproportionate to the development of the trade in

coals and vegetables, notwithstanding that the rolling stock had been increased by a new truck and a second bed-wrench. John's ambition had often taken a run at a horse and cart; but it had never been able to vault so high, and always fell back upon the truck and hurt itself in the region of its dignity. A truck is not a glorious kind of vehicle—especially a coal-truck. It is a vehicle that takes the pavement rather than the middle of the road, for choice, and although the thunder which it makes as it traverses the coal-traps on the pavement is considerable, it is not a source of pride to its owner. Besides, it does not warrant the assumption of that sceptre of authority, a whip; and it is usually propelled by one of the human species. Well, it would never do if we all had the same ambition. While some persons aspire to rule their fellow-men, there are others who prefer to exercise authority over the brutes in driving a horse and cart. This was John's case. A horse and cart, with a corresponding increase of business, and a drive down the road to the Jolly Butchers on Sunday afternoon, with the missus in all her best by his side, and the kids with their faces washed behind, like a pen of clean little pigs—this had been the dream of John's life; but it was a dream that had not yet come true. Indeed, so far from this, John's prospects were becoming darker than brighter every day.

"What was to be done?"

This question, which had long suggested itself both to John and Martha, found audible expression one night, after the black Beadles had scampered away to their holes for the night. Old Daddy Dodd was sitting dozing in his chair by the side of the fire, and John and Martha were sitting opposite.

It was John who propounded the question:

"What was to be done?"

Martha made no audible reply; but, after a pause, raised her eyes to John's face, and then looked across significantly at Daddy.

John shook his head, and covered his face with his hand.

"I have no right to ask you to do it any longer, John," Martha said. "I had no right ever to expect you to do it."

"But it was my duty and my pleasure to do it, Martha," John replied. "He's your father, and I couldn't see the poor old man starve!"

"But he needn't *starve*, you know, John," Martha said; and her lips trembled as she said the words.

"I know what you mean," John returned; "but I can't bear the thoughts of it. It's not what ought to be, when he's had a house of his own and drove his own chay, and paid rates and taxes, and every comfort."

"Well, it *is* hard, when you think of it," Martha replied, sadly; "and the drawing-room that we had, too, and the silver spoons, and the real china cups and saucers!" And at the thought of the china cups and saucers Martha dropped a tear.

"Yes, it is hard," John returned; "and that's why I have stood between him and *it* as long as I could."

"But you can't stand between him and *it* any longer, John, and I mustn't ask you to ; it's not fair to you, John, and you shan't be burdened with him any longer."

Poor old Daddy was sitting dozing in his chair, blissfully unconscious of these deliberations, of which he was the subject. In his time Daddy had been in a good, though small way of business, in the carpentering line, combined with a little undertaking (which he undertook in his overtime, to oblige friends), and he had brought up a large family decently; but his sons, who might have been a help to him in his declining years, emigrated, and died in foreign parts; and when the infirmities of age began to creep upon the old man, and he was no longer able to work with his own hands, he disposed of his business at an alarming sacrifice, and retired to live on his means. His means were small, but his remaining years were few; and proceeding on his philosophical calculation, Daddy lived upon the principal instead of the interest (which he could not have lived upon at all), and lived longer than he calculated. Although Daddy disposed of his business, and let the carpenter's shop, he still continued to occupy the dwelling-house of which it formed a part, and this led many to believe that the old carpenter was pretty well off. His daughter Martha shared in this impression, and was rather disposed to boast of the independent gentleman, her father, and cherish expectations of an inheritance.

One day, about two years after Martha had been married to John Beadle, and shortly after she had prodigally presented John with the second pledge of her affection, old Daddy arrived at the emporium suffused with smiles. Martha thought he was going to present baby with the silver spoons. When the old man had settled himself in a chair, and recovered his breath, he said, with a pleasant chuckle,

"I've got something to tell you, Martha."

"What is it, father?"

"Well, Martha, I've been looking in the top drawer, and—and—"

"Yes, father, yes," said Martha, eagerly, making quite sure now that baby was to have the spoons.

"I've been looking in the top drawer," the old man repeated, "and—and—"

"The spoons," Martha suggested, as dutifully helping her poor old father in a difficulty.

"No, not the spoons, Martha," he said, "the money."

"What about the money, father?"

"It's all gone, Martha!"

"All gone! The money you've got to live upon, father," cried Martha, hysterically, "all gone?"

"Every farden," said the old man.

Martha could not believe it. She gave baby to a neighbour to mind, and insisted upon the old man going back with her to his lodging immediately. He gave her the key, and she tore open the top drawer in a frantic way. She seized the canvas bag in which the old man kept his money (for he had an unconquerable distrust of banks), and plunged her hand into

it. She could feel nothing like coin. She turned the bag inside out and shook it, nothing fell out of it. She rummaged among the useless odds and ends in the drawer, and not a farthing could she find. Suddenly she paused and said,

"You've been robbed, father. Somebody's been at the drawer."

"No, no, my dear, you mustn't say that; nobody's been at the drawer but me. I've spent it all. There wasn't much of it, only eighty pounds altogether, and it wouldn't last for ever. It's me that's lived too long, Martha;" and the old man sat down in a chair and began to whimper and weep.

Martha could only sit down and weep too. She was overwhelmed by the thought of her father's destitution and the prospect which lay before him in his weak old age. His money was all gone, and his few sticks of furniture, with the silver spoons, which were the only portion of his plate which remained, would scarcely realise enough to bury him.

This was sad news to tell John when he came in (from a moving job) to his dinner. Martha, by way of breaking it gently to him, hysterically shrieked out the tidings at the top of her voice as John was coming in at the door.

"Oh, John, father's money's all gone," she cried.

Seeing that Martha was in a dreadful state of excitement about the matter, John, with a proper appreciation of artistic contrast, took the unwelcome announcement coolly.

"Well," he said, "in that case we must keep him. He has nobody else to look to."

And so one day John went over to Daddy's house, sent for a broker and disposed of all the things except the old man's bed, which he despatched by the truck to the emporium. That done, he locked the door, sent the key to the landlord, and taking the old man by the hand, led him to the shelter of the broken-backed roof. Putting him into the old arm-chair by the fire, and patting him kindly on his bald head, he said :

"There, Daddy, consider yourself at home—provided for for the rest of your life."

So it happened that John and Martha were burdened with old Daddy Dodd, in addition to their own numerous offspring. And Daddy was a burden, though neither John nor Martha ever said so, even to each other. He was an expensive old man, for though he did not eat much, and was well content to share a bedroom with the boys, he had, considering his circumstances, an unreasonable passion for snuff; and a glass of "six ale," punctually every morning at eleven o'clock, was absolutely necessary to his existence. The glass of six ale he *would* have, and he would have it nowhere but in the public-house, standing at the pewter bar, according to a custom which he had most religiously observed for more than forty years. One of the inconveniences of this requirement was that the old man had to be provided every morning with three-halfpence in current coin of the realm; and another, which followed in the course of time, when the old man became de-

crepid and feeble, was that some one had to take him to the particular public-house on which alone he would bestow his patronage (half a mile distant), and bring him back again.

Still no word of complaint escaped either John or Martha, until their family increased to that extent when every halfpenny became, as Martha said, an "object." The crisis arrived that night, when John, in general but significant terms, asked his good wife what was to be done.

"It is not fair to you, John," Martha said, "and you shan't be burdened with him any longer." And, while the old man sat dozing in his chair, all unconscious, it was resolved between them, after a hard struggle on John's part and many silent tears on Martha's part, that John should next day put old Daddy into the workhouse. The resolution was taken, and the old man slept on. Neither John nor Martha had the courage to wake him. They were afraid that he might read their terrible intentions towards him in their guilty faces. "I cannot do it, Martha," John said; and he made an excuse to go out of doors to smoke his pipe. Martha could not do it either, and sat waiting for the old man to wake, and presently he woke and called for her. She had withdrawn into the shade, and he could not see her with his dim old eyes.

"Martha," he said, "where are you? Come here and let me tell you what I've been dreaming about. Such a pleasant dream, my dear, about the old days when you was all at home! I thought I saw you all round the table eating your Christmas dinners; and there was turkey and plum-pudding and all the nice things that we used to have, you know; and then I dreamt that I was taking you to the boarding-school, where you was for a twelvemonth, you know; and—and, as we was driving down the Edge-ware-road in the chaise, John came up and wanted to borrow five pounds, just as he used to do, you know, and, and I lent it him, just as I used to do, and—and—but what's the matter with you, Martha? you're not crying, surely?"

Poor old man, he little knew what thorns he was planting in his daughter's breast. She was crying, but she hid her tears, and said kindly it was time for him to go to bed.

So, taking him by the hand, and leading him to his room, she put him to bed and tucked him up like a child.

When Martha went down-stairs again, John was timidly peeping in at the door.

"Have you put him to bed, Martha?" he inquired.

"Yes, John."

"Do you think he suspected anything?"

"Oh no, poor old dear."

"No, of course not, Martha," John said, "he would never dream that we could be such monsters—but did he say anything?"

"Yes, he said, 'God bless you, Martha, and God bless John, for all your kindness.'"

John, whose heart was much too big for his other faculties, withdrew his head from the door, and vented his smitten feelings in a howl.

John and Martha crawled up to bed that night with the sense of a premeditated crime weighing

upon their souls. As they passed the room where the old man lay, they turned away their faces.

Next morning Martha dressed her old baby in his best clothes, crying over him all the while, and hiding her tears as best she could. Daddy wanted to know if it was Sunday, that they were putting on his best things, and Martha could not answer. Every innocent word he uttered was a reproach to her. She could not look at him at breakfast-time, neither could John.

When breakfast was over, John said to the old man, in as cheerful a tone as he could command,

"Grandfather, I'm going to take you for a walk."

"That's kind of you, John," said the old man—"very kind."

"Well, come along, grandfather; here's your hat and stick."

"I'm ready, John, quite ready. Eh? bless me, what's the matter now, my dear?"

Martha had her arms round his neck, kissing him.

"Good-bye, father," she said, through her sobs, "good-bye."

She had resolved not to say it, but she couldn't help it.

"Tut, tut, my dear," said the old man, "we are not going far. Are we, John?"

"No, grandfather, not very far."

"And we'll come back soon, won't we, John?"

"Oh yes, grandfather," John said; and the words almost choked him.

Martha whispered to the children to go and shake hands with their grandfather; and wondering what this unusual ceremony meant, they did as they were told, quietly and silently.

The old man was as much puzzled as the children, and wanted to know if it was a birthday. John could not answer him; his heart was full and his utterance choked. Without another word he took the old man by the hand, and led him from the house; and Martha stood in the doorway, surrounded by the children, looking after them sadly through her tears. It was barely a quarter of a mile to the workhouse, but it was a long journey for Daddy, who was getting very frail now. He dropped his stick very often, and John had to stoop and pick it up for him, and there were dangerous crossings to pass, where it was necessary for John to signal to drivers of vehicles to draw up and slacken speed until he carried the old man safely over to the other side of the road. Poor old Daddy, going to the workhouse, was highly honoured that day. The stream of traffic stayed its current and diverted its course to let him pass. It could not have done more for the Lord Mayor. At length John, leading his unconscious charge by the hand, arrived in front of the workhouse gates. At the sight of the gloomy portal and the high black wall, which shuts in life and shuts out hope, his resolution began to fail him. He stopped and hesitated.

"Grandfather," he said, "it's about time for your glass of ale, ain't it?"

"Well, yes, John, I think it's getting on that way," said the old man, in a cheery tone.

"Will you take it here?" John asked.

"Is this the Nag's Head?" the old man inquired.

The Nag's Head was the house which he had "used" for forty years.

"No, grandfather," John said; "this is not the Nag's Head; but they keep a good glass of ale here."

"Well, just as you like," Daddy assented.

So John took the old man into a public-house opposite the workhouse gates, and gave him the usual three-halfpence; for it was Daddy's pride always to pay for his liquor with his own hand. While Daddy was sipping his ale, John tossed off a couple of glasses of spirits: he was trying to screw his failing courage to the point. When the old man had finished his glass, John took him once more by the hand, and hurriedly led him across the road. He was at the gate, hesitating, with a full heart, looking through a mist of tears at the handle of the workhouse bell, inviting only the clutch of despair, when the old man looked up in his face and said:

"John!"

"Yes, grandfather."

"Ain't this the workhouse?"

Daddy's look, his intimation that he knew where he was, the thought that he suspected his design, struck John to the heart; and he hurried the old man away from the gate.

"The workhouse, grandfather, no, no!" John said; "what made you think of that? Come, come away, come away; we're going home, grandfather, going home as fast as we can."

John was so anxious to drag Daddy away from the spot, that he fairly lifted him off his legs and carried him across the road. In his excitement and haste he quite forgot Daddy's feebleness, and hurried him along at such a rate that the old man lost his breath, and was nearly falling. It was not until a street had been put between them and the workhouse, that John relaxed his speed and allowed Daddy to recover himself. After that he led him gently back to the emporium, took him in, and replaced him in his old chair by the fireside.

"I couldn't do it, Martha," he said; "my hand was on the bell, when he looked up at me and spoke to me; and his look, and what he said, struck me to the heart. I couldn't do it. I felt as if I was going to murder the poor old man. It's worse than murder, Martha, to put a fellow-creature in yonder; it's burying him alive!"

"But, John—"

"I say it shall never be done by me, Martha," John interposed, sternly. "We must do the best we can for him, and strive to the last to save him and ourselves from that disgrace."

An interchange of looks sealed the compact between them—that Daddy was to have a home with them while they had a roof to call their own, and a loaf of bread to share with him.

Old Daddy had not only been a considerable expense to John and Martha, but during the winter months he had been much in the way. He was always pottering about in the shop,

which being also the sitting-room, did not afford much scope for business and domesticity combined. But now the fine days were coming, and Daddy would be able to spend a good deal of his time out of doors. So, when the fine days came, little Benjy, John's youngest but two, who was not old enough to be of any assistance in the business, was appointed to the sole and undivided duty of minding grandfather, and taking him for walks, when it was convenient to get him out of the way. Little Benjy, a little, large-headed, wise-looking boy of six years, was Daddy's especial pet and favourite; or, perhaps, it might have been said, so much more responsible a person was Benjy, that Daddy was *his* pet and favourite. Be that as it would, they loved each other, and on fine days, when the sun shone, it was their delight to wander hand in hand among the neighbouring streets, prattling together like two children, and gazing in, with child-like wonder, at the pretty things in the shop windows. The people round about called them the Babes in the Wood, and old Daddy was certainly as much a babe as Benjy. He took the same interest in the contents of the toy-shops, and sighed as deeply as Benjy sighed to think that his youthful guardian could not become the possessor of a much-coveted toy-gun (with a pink stock), which went off with a spiral spring. In their wanderings, day by day, the Babes saw many strange things, and studied the wonders of Somers Town with the deepest interest. It was their special delight to stand before any open door or window, which afforded them a view of a process of manufacture. They stood on gratings and listened to the rattle of sausage-machines "that went by steam," Benjy informed his charge and pupil, who was not very well up in the modern arts and sciences; they gazed at the little men in shirt-sleeves and flat caps, who turned a miniature coffee-mill under a glass case at the grocer's—such industrious little men, who always kept on grinding whether their master was in the shop or not, and never seemed to go home to their meals. They superintended the lowering of barrels into public-house cellars, learning the mysteries of the inclined plane, and speculating as to whether the barrels contained the particular kind of six ale which grandfather liked; they watched the making of shoes and the turning of wood, and were sometimes observed to be much absorbed in the flaying of sheep, a process which had a deep abstract interest for Benjy, while it set Daddy babbling about the delights—to him now purely visionary—of a boiled leg of mutton and caper sauce.

In these wanderings Benjy was careful not to release his hold of Daddy's hand, for he was particularly enjoined never to leave him for a moment, and whatever he did not to let him tumble down. One muddy day Benjy *did* let Daddy tumble, and a sad state of mind he was in for fear his mother should find it out. He did his best with his little cotton pocket-handkerchief to efface all traces of mud from Daddy's trousers: but he was afraid lest the old

man might "tell on him." Not that there was any want of loyalty between them, but Daddy was getting so garrulous, that he sometimes, quite unintentionally, let out things which got Benjy into trouble; so, when anything happened, Benjy was obliged to remind grandfather that he was not to tell.

" You won't tell mother that I let you fall in the mud, will you, grandfather?" he would say, as they bent their steps homeward.

" Oh no, Benjy," the old man protested. " I — I shan't say a word about it."

At first, before complete confidence had been established between them, Benjy sought on one occasion to purchase his grandfather's silence with a penny (which he did not at that moment possess, but expected to have some day), but he had come to know now that the bond of love between them was strong enough to sustain their mutual devotion, except when it was occasionally loosened by an inadvertence, or a lapse of memory, which, in Daddy's case, was beyond the power of either love or money to control. Going home in the summer evenings, after their rambles, Daddy and Benjy had deeply interesting tales to tell the family of the wonders of the great world of Somers Town.

Alas, that those relations should so often have fallen upon indifferent ears! But John and Martha were becoming sullen and moody, a prey both of them to the deepest anxiety. The family was still increasing, but the business continued to resist all efforts in the direction of development. John was getting into debt at the coal wharf, and at the potato warehouse. The times were hard, and were coming on harder with the approach of winter. Coals were at eighteen-pence a hundred, potatoes at a penny a pound. The poor people couldn't pay the price. Poor women came for a few pounds of coal and took them away in their aprons. There was scarcely any use for the truck. When coals were so dear and fires so small, Chaldron-street was a good deal given to warm itself in its bed, which thus became a permanent institution. The consequence to John was that his bed-wrench rusted in idleness, and in view of the oxyde which accumulated upon it, it might be said to have been engaged in the disastrous occupation of eating its head off. The fortunes of the emporium were at a very low ebb; John and Martha could scarcely provide bare food for the family. The black Beadles, clamouring for victuals, and not finding satisfaction at the little round table, passed like a cloud of locusts over the stock in the shop, and making short work of the carrots, attacked even the cabbage-leaves and the turnip-tops. John and Martha were denying themselves day after day, that the old man might have a bit of something nice and nourishing. But things were coming to a crisis now. The coal-merchant, the potato-merchant, and the landlord, all three threatened process, and John was in hourly expectation of an execution. All his striving had been of no avail to save "him and them from that disgrace." It must come now. Nothing could avert it.

One afternoon John was sitting on a stool, on the site of the mountain of coal, which had been removed to the last shovelful of dust (and, alas! the capitalist at the wharf had not the faith to replace it), utterly dejected and dispirited. It was a terrible trial for a strong man with a stout heart and a vigorous will, to be thus beaten down and trampled under the feet of a cruel and relentless Fortune, whom he had wooed with all his art, and wrestled with all his strength. Poor John had received so many heavy falls, that the spirit was almost crushed out of him. When he looked up and saw a strange man darkening his door, he felt that the last blow was about to be struck.

" Come in," he said; " don't stand upon any ceremony, I beg; I'm quite prepared for you."

" Are you?" said the man, curiously.

" Yes, I am," John replied. " I know your errand as well as you do yourself."

" Do you?" said the man, in the same tone.

" Do you come here to mock me?" cried John, angrily, rising and facing the intruder; " to mock me as well as ruin me."

" Mock you?" said the man.

" Yes, mock me," John repeated, in the same angry tone.

" I did not come here to mock you; far from it," the man returned. " In fact, my business is not with you at all. I came to see Mr. Dodd, who was an old neighbour of mine."

" I beg your pardon, sir," said John. " You'll excuse me, I hope; but we are in great distress, and I expected nothing but bad news."

" If I am not mistaken," said the stranger, " it is good news I bring you. You are Mr. Dodd's son-in-law, are you not?"

" I am, sir, and I wish I were a richer son-in-law for his sake," John replied.

" Perhaps there will be no need for that, *for his sake*," the stranger returned.

" What do you mean?" John asked.

" Well, just this," said the stranger. " A few days ago I noticed an advertisement in the paper, addressed to Daniel Dodd, informing him that if he applied to Mr. Johnson, solicitor, in Bedford-row, he would hear of something to his advantage. Now, thinking that the Daniel Dodd wanted might be my old neighbour, and knowing Mr. Johnson, of Bedford-row, I called upon that gentleman, and learned that the person wanted is Daniel Dodd, my old neighbour, and that under the will of his brother George, who died some time ago in India, he is entitled to—"

" Hold hard, sir," said John, grasping the stranger by the arm, and staring at him with fixed eyes. " You're not having a lark, a cruel lark with us, are you?"

" God forbid," said the stranger, gravely.

" And answer me another thing, sir," John continued, in the same excited way. " You're not out of your mind, are you?"

" Certainly not," returned the man.

" Very well," said John; " you may go on."

" I was going to say," the stranger continued, " that under the will of his deceased brother

George, who died some time ago in India, Daniel Dodd is entitled to five thousand pounds."

"Martha!" cried John to his wife, who was up-stairs cleaning the rooms.

"Yes, John. What is it?"

"Father's money's come back again! Father's money's come back again! Father's money's come back again!" And he shouted it over and over again up the stairs, and slapped the bannisters every time to give it emphasis.

"Are you gone mad, John?" was Martha's reply, when she was allowed to speak.

"You see, sir," said John to his visitor; "she thinks I must be mad; no wonder if I thought you were mad. But here's Daddy; he knows you, I dare say, and you can tell him; he often talked about his brother George who went to India; but I thought he had been dead long ago."

At that moment Daddy came in from one of his walks with Benjy, and was told of his fortune.

"Dear me," he said, sinking into his chair, "brother George is dead. Poor boy, poor boy!"

The poor boy had died at the good old age of threescore and ten, but Daddy still thought of him as the lad in the blue jacket from whom he had parted at Wapping when they were boys.

Not without many difficulties, long delay, and considerable cost, Daddy's claim to the five thousand pounds was established. John gave all his time—utterly neglecting the emporium—to the prosecution of the matter, and, oddly enough, in wooing Fortune in this most audacious and presumptuous manner, he proved successful; though, previously, when he had humbled himself in the dirt to implore her for a single smile, she had contemptuously passed onward, bespattering him with mud from her chariot-wheels. And one day John, knowing Daddy's weakness, brought home the five thousand pounds all in notes in the very canvas bag which had been the old man's bank in the days when he was well to do.

"There, father," said Martha, "putting the bag in his hand. And now what will you do with it?"

"What will I do with it?" said the old man. "I'll—I'll keep my promise to Benjy, and buy him that gun!"

"But there's more than will buy the gun, father."

"You don't mean that, Martha?" said the old man.

"Oh yes, father, a heap more."

"Then," said Daddy, "I'll give the rest to John to buy a horse and cart."

"But there's more even than that, father; ever so much more."

"Oh, well, you just keep that for yourself, Martha, for taking care of your old father."

Ahd Daddy, with no elaborate design, but with the simple innocence of a child, which is sometimes wiser than the astute provisions of law, saved the dangerous formalities of will-making and the charges for legacy duty, by handing to his daughter Martha the bag containing all his money.

Before John even thought of his horse and cart—though that was lurking in a corner of his mind—he regained the tenancy of Daddy's old house, furnished it with as many of the old sticks as he could recover from the brokers' shops, with many splendid new ones besides for the drawing-room, and, when all was done, led Daddy back to his old quarters, and joined him there with Martha and all the family.

But dotage had been coming upon poor old Daddy, and he could scarcely be made to understand the change which had taken place in his position. He came at last to fancy that it was a dream, and sitting by the fireside of an evening, and recognising his old room peopled with the faces of John and Martha and their children, he would tell his daughter to wake him up by-and-by.

And so he went on dreaming, until one winter's night he woke up in a land where there was no more going to sleep.

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